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SONNETS AND OTHER POEMS

By the same Author.

OUTLINES
OF THE
HISTORY OF RELIGION.
Crown 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.

*Jamie Couan
From Joy.*

SONNETS 1900

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN K. INGRAM

LONDON

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1900

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1900

PREFATORY NOTE.

ONLY four of the Sonnets in the present volume have been previously published, and two of them have since been slightly altered.

The sonnets signed 'T. D. I.' are by Thomas Dunbar Ingram (son of the author of the other pieces in the volume), who, after a distinguished career in Trinity College, Dublin, died in South Africa, whither he had gone in search of health, at the age of twenty-five.

The second series of sonnets will scarcely be fully understood without some knowledge of the writings of Auguste Comte, who is in several places spoken of as 'the Master.' I would earnestly recommend to all who read my verses the study of those writings—of, at least, the 'Catéchisme Positiviste,' in the original or in Dr. Congreve's translation, or of the 'General View of Positivism,' translated by Dr. Bridges.

The poem entitled 'The Memory of the Dead' was published in the 'Nation' newspaper in April, 1843, when I was in my twentieth year. That was the early period of the so-called Young Irelanders, whose policy, though deficient in sanity, was inspired by nobler feelings than have since, for the most part, been manifested in the public conduct of the Irish popular leaders. Their political projects were, as I soon saw, chimerical; but their action, though violent and precipitate, was not sordid or demoralizing. I never was a member of the group, but some of them were known to me, and I had one dear friend amongst them—John (afterwards Judge) O'Hagan. 'The Memory of the Dead' was my only contribution to the 'Nation.' It has already been reprinted, with my name, in several collections of Irish verse. I have reproduced it here, though differing in character, as in date, from the other pieces in the volume, because some persons have believed, or affected to believe, that I am ashamed of having written it, and would gladly, if I could, disown its authorship. Those who know me do not need to be told that this idea is without foundation. I think the Irish race should be grateful to men who, in evil times, however mistaken may have been their policy, gave their lives for their country. But I have no sympathy

with those who preach sedition in our own day, when all the circumstances are radically altered. In my opinion no real popular interest can now be furthered by violence.

The sonnet by the late Archbishop Trench has been printed in order to render intelligible the one which follows it.

Dublin, 1900.

CONTENTS.

| | PAGES |
|---|--------|
| I.—LOVE AND SORROW, | 11-33 |
| II.—THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY, | 35-64 |
| III.—MISCELLANEOUS, | 65-106 |


I.

LOVE AND SORROW.

DELGANY.

JUST ere the feet of her I loved the best
Began to tread the thorny path of pain,
We two, with all our joyous household train,
Found in a Wicklow glen our summer rest.
Sweet was our sojourn in that peaceful nest.
The garden pleas'd us, and the stream that flow'd
Beneath the thatch-roof'd cot, our quaint abode ;
Not seldom, too, we hail'd some friendly guest.
She lov'd the place, and often spoke its praise ;
And then would I half-playfully repeat
The words of Deirdré, from a like retreat
Forc'd to return to Erin's endless jars—
' Sun kiss thee, moon caress thee, dewy stars
Refresh thee still, dear scene of quiet days ! '*

* The last two lines of this Sonnet are from Sir Samuel Ferguson's fine poem—*Deirdre*.



II.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

WHY should thy form upon the rack of pain—
Thy delicate form—be stretch'd? who ever true
And tender wert, and pure as morning dew.
On me, whose soul was black with many a stain,
Which, but ill purg'd, would oft appear again,
Till thy sweet influence did my life renew—
On me, if justice some high Power could do,
The doom were laid this bitter cup to drain.
My burden is, that thine I cannot bear.
Nightly I listen with love-quicken'd ears
To the half-utter'd moan which thou would'st fain
Wholly suppress, my tortur'd heart to spare;
Then is my pillow drench'd with silent tears—
Oh could they profit!—but I weep in vain.

III.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

I.

PoET supreme! who leavest far behind
In piercing gaze, in lofty flight and long,
All winged Powers that haunt the heaven of song,—
When she who was my pearl of womankind,
Whose fingers from my soul had disentwin'd
The tangling weeds of folly, pined in pain,
Oft thy austere, yet tender-hearted strain
Rais'd up and calm'd my downcast, troubled mind.
When evening fell, th' immortal page I read
That made thee lean, as grief had wasted me:
Then came Dantean dreams about my bed,
The Purgatorial mount I seem'd to see,
Or Madeline my wondering spirit led
Through happy fields, as Beatricè thee.

IV.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

II.

WITHIN the place where patient souls abide
In hopeful suffering,—dead among the dead
Methought I stood, and pray'd with bended head,
When sudden shone an angel at my side,
Who to my startled questioning glance replied—
'Because thou hast lov'd well, the Lord hath said
It is His will that thou be comforted.
Ask what thou wilt; it shall not be denied.'
'Show me my saint—one moment, only one!'
And lo! an image, on cloud-canvas cast,
Of a great company in robes of white,
And 'mongst them *she*, with face divinely bright
Upturn'd, adoring. Soon the vision pass'd;
But long I stood and gaz'd, though it was gone.

V.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

III.

‘BUT knew she that I saw her, Power benign?’
Turning, I ask’d; he answer’d—‘When the light,
That clothes a blessed one, glows doubly bright,
Of some new joy is this the outward sign.
The mirror of th’ Intelligence Divine
Shows her all good; because she knew the grace
That was vouchsafed thee, was it that her face
Thou saw’st with such transcendent lustre shine.’
‘I thank thee, blessed Spirit!’ I replied;
‘Now all is well; I go with heart content
My purgatorial suffering to abide.
I shall rejoin her, when my term is spent.’
The Angel smiled, then vanish’d from my side,
And I address’d me to the steep ascent.

VI.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

IV.

LONG, in that realm of pain that is not woe—
The second, better kingdom of the dead
Through which the mighty Florentine was led—
Methought, like him, I travell'd from below,
With patient heart, but feeble steps and slow.
I pass'd the fiery fence, and reach'd the head
Of the steep mount, where, from twin fountains fed,
Lethe and Eunoe, diverse waters, flow.
Then, conscious of a presence at my side,
I turn'd and saw the face whence sweetness beams
And all things pure. 'Oh, Madeline,' I cried,
'How have I sought thee, even in my dreams !'
'I know thou hast been faithful,' she replied,
'Come, let me lead thee to the healing streams.'

VII.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

v.

So, hand in hand, together mov'd we o'er
The flowery fields that crown that holy height ;
But these I little mark'd, for soul and sight
Hung on the heav'nly face I saw once more.
We came and stood where from a cavern hoar
Those streams that Dante saw, one crystal-bright,
One dusk-hued but transparent, spring to light.
And part, like brethren at their father's door
Who know too well they ne'er again shall meet.
She bade me kneel and drink ; I knelt and quaff'd
The flowing darkness of the duller wave :
Then, stooping, from her hollow'd palm she gave
Thrice to my willing lips the sparkling draught,
For the dear cup that held it doubly sweet.

VIII.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

VI.

THE draught from out the darker of the springs
A gloom Lethean o'er my spirit cast.
I saw the present only—not the past.
Long-cherish'd memories of blessed things,
Of dear love-service and sweet communings—
Had vanish'd quite, nor less each harrowing thought
Of kindness slighted or injustice wrought,
With which Remorse the shrinking bosom stings.
But when the fairer wave refresh'd my lips,
While those ill memories were still effaced,
The good revived, now more than ever bright ;
So some skill'd hand in chymic mixture dips
A scroll whereon an unseen text is traced,
And lo ! the hidden letters leap to light.

IX.

DANTEAN DREAMS.

VII.

THE AWAKING.

THESE were but dreams, of Dante's magic bred.
There is no mout of healing pain, I know,
Save that up which, with struggling effort slow,
In this our world repentant sinners tread.
Bright winged creatures do not come and go,
From orb to orb on mystic errands sped ;
Nor need I heav'nly visitants to show
How I should think of thee, my dear one dead !
Had Gabriel pass'd me at thy chamber door
With 'Ave, gratia plena' on his tongue,
Or had he o'er thee at thy parting hung,
And traced the sign of blessing on thy brow,
Should I thy memory higher prize than now ?
A saint I knew thee—he could know no more.

X.

LOVE'S TEACHINGS.

LOVE, thou has train'd me in a school severe.
'This man,' thou said'st, 'knows somewhat of my lore,
But not enough; lo! I will teach him more.'
So Sorrow came, and sojourn'd with me here,
Wearing the form and face to me most dear.
Then learn'd I laws of thine, but guess'd before,
The hard, hard lesson conning o'er and o'er,
While on the page fell many a bitter tear.
Still Self within me feebly strove; but when
Death came and hid my angel from my sight—
Not from my soul—Self died, and rose again
Newborn, in one joint being blent with her.
And now, O Love, I own thy matchless might,
That even of Death can'st make thy minister.

XI.

AN APPEAL.

LADIES, who understand the gentle lore
Of courteous words, kind deeds, and gracious ways,
Bear witness, ye who knew her—do I praise
More than she merits her whom I deplore?
Will ye not say—‘thy dear one to adore,
And of her worth fit monument to raise,
This be the sacred task of all thy days,
Thy solace this, till thy brief term be o’er.
More loving heart ne’er beat in human breast.
Her life was all a willing service, done
With simple dignity and artless grace.
In her sweet converse weary souls found rest,
And from her breath’d such purity that none
Could think of evil, looking on her face.’

XII.

VISITATIONS.

SOMETIMES evoked by stress of prayers and tears,
And sometimes all unbidden, of free grace,
She gives me sight of her beloved face—
Now as the bright young maiden she appears,
Who shook my heart long since with hopes and fears ;
Now, as she bloom'd, a flower of womanhood,
Image and source to me of all things good,
In the ripe summer of our wedded years.
But oftenest the dear features wear again
The smile so sad, yet so divinely sweet,
They wore in those last months of patient pain.
Then first her saintly soul I fully knew ;
Love turn'd to worship, and my spirit threw
Itself in adoration at her feet.

XIII.

PAST AND PRESENT.

ONCE Joy each morn our window-curtains drew,
And smiling bade us hail—' Rise, happy pair,
A new day calls you and the world is fair.'
But one dark dawning quench'd my zeal to view
Heav'ns matin pomp—its wealth of varying hue.
Now by my lonely bed—*she* is not there—
The vestal Duty stands with solemn air,
And says—' Remember, thou hast much to do.'
I turn and gaze on her, half-blind with tears,
And lo! she is transfigured, and I see
No longer her with looks severe, but thee,
My blessed one, with eyes of love that still
Shed peace and comfort as in vanish'd years—
And prompt I rise, thy counsels to fulfil.

XIV.

THE ANGELUS.

SLEEPLESS I often lie at dawn of day—
Then from the convent tower that rises near
The trebly threefold note salutes my ear
That bids the true believer muse and pray.
With answering heart *my* Angelus I say,
And think of her who was so lately here—
Of her whose love through many a happy year
Brought me all good, and charm'd all ills away.
Again each sacred stage I travel o'er,
From the dusk eve when, hearing first her voice,
(Her face half hid) my heart presaged its choice—
To that last morn when 'midst white flowers she lay,
With brow and cheek, ah! white and cold as they—
No longer mine, yet mine for evermore.

XV.

'TIME the Consoler'—so with specious phrase
Men seek their base ingratitude to screen,
Oblivious of the lost ones who have been
Their joy and glory in the by-gone days.
But ne'er shall cloud that low desire can raise,
Or selfish quest of consolation mean,
Or the world's feverish turmoil, come between
Thee and my longing spirit's wistful gaze.
Who will may woo Lethean apathy ;
But if the years with dead'ning fingers slow
Could dull thy image written in my heart—
Then should we seem a second time to part ;
Forlorn I were indeed, and Time would be—
Consoler ? nay, but deepener of my woe.

XVI.

As rich men, never talking of their store,
Nor thinking of it oft—yet walk elate,
As inly conscious that their wealth is great ;
So, in the happy years that are no more
There liv'd within my being's central core
A calm, deep sense of my so favour'd state—
Possessing wealth past human estimate
In her, who brought all blessings to my door.
Now in the eternal world my treasure lies—
From thoughts of her I borrow day by day
Strength to my feet and guidance on my way.
Yet, walking thus by faith, I yearn for sight—
Yearn for her visible presence, and the light
That shone upon me from those loving eyes.

XVII.

NOT seldom, when in foreign lands we fare,
We see in rudely-fashion'd wayside shrine
An image of the Mother-maid divine ;
And thus we muse—' not less the pious care
That such memorial shaped and placed it there,
Than moved the artist bent on high design—
Marvel of Roman skill or Florentine—
Destin'd to grace some glorious House of Prayer.'
So, a poor craftsman, to my lady's praise
I dedicate these all unworthy lays,
That tender souls may cherish the dear name.
Would Petrarch's lute were mine, and Petrarch's art!
Tuneless my voice to his ; but in his heart
For his lost love glow'd no intenser flame.

XVIII.

HALLOWED GROUND.

BEAUTIFUL soul, that for too brief a space
Look'd on this world of ours through human eyes—
The thought of thy mute presence sanctifies
For us who lov'd and love thee, every place
Oft brighten'd with the sunshine of thy face :
But chief we dally with that fond surmise
Here, where thou didst all household charities
Daily dispense with meek unconscious grace,
And where thy nobleness shone fully forth—
The crown and consummation of thy worth—
When unembitter'd, unsubdued by pain,
'Like a bright saint,' as said my poet-friend,
Thou didst thy heavy burden long sustain,
Serene and uncomplaining to the end.

XIX.

OFT must we feel to what frail tenement
All is entrusted that we fondly prize.
What is most precious to our heart and eyes
Is not our freehold, is not giv'n but lent.
We need not hold that Powers maleficent
With conscious purpose break our dearest ties,
And lives, else rich, thus blight and pauperise—
Enough, that we are thralls of accident.
While all our prospect looks serene and fair,
The heavens grow dark, and in a single day
We lose what cost the toil of years to gain.
Yet droop not therefore ; nought can bar the way
That leads our souls o'er rugged tracts or plain
Up to diviner heights and purer air.

XX.

How brief, how troubled is this mortal scene !
The cruel fates our cherish'd hopes deride,
And rudely snatch our dear ones from our side.
Yet, looking back through tears on what hath been,
I own the truth—though sobs that rise between
Impede the utterance—that, by grief untried,
By memories of the dead unsanctified,
Our life were but a shallow thing and mean.
We are not made for self-complacent ease,
Or boastful confidence. But oh ! stern Powers,
Whate'er ye be, that rule our destinies,
Pity poor mortals, and forbear to lay
Too heavy burdens on these hearts of ours,
Or we shall faint and perish by the way.

XXI.

TREASURED WORDS.

IN those last days ere I was left alone—
Days saddest, yet most sacred, I have known—
Seven words *she* spake, which in my heart shall live
Till sister Death my parting sign shall give.
Write not those words, my hand! but let them be
A holy secret between her and me.

On one I think each morn when dawn is gray,
And keep it for my solace through the day;
And so, within the compass of the week,
All seven I seem to hear my angel speak.
Ah me! but seem—yet will I not repine;
I mourn not my own sufferings, dear! but thine.

II.

THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY.

I.

TO THE READER.

BROTHER, who glancest with a heedless eye
 At these my strains, to thee they well may seem
 To show but forms of a distemper'd dream,
 So far from thoughts and hopes of thine they lie.
 I know that they are fated soon to die ;
 But, if they live the common term of men,
 And one who knows his time shall read them then,
 He may perchance with sympathetic sigh
 Thus muse or murmur—'When our faith was young,
 This man beheld and bless'd the dawning light,
 And sang its triumph in no doubtful tone,
 Though with a tuneless harp and stammering tongue.'
 O well for me, if coming years shall write
 Such words as these on my memorial stone !

II.

TRANSFIGURATION.

I.

LATE in a dream methought I slowly stray'd
Through an antique cathedral's spaces vast,
And in the Lady Chapel stood at last
Before a picture, where my steps I stay'd
In contemplation of the group portray'd
By the old master's pencil, which surpass'd
All others in the mystic charm it cast
About the features of the blessed Maid.
Star-crown'd she stood upon a crescent moon,
And to her bosom clasp'd her wondrous boy.
The Eternal Father, stooping from above,
O'er son and mother stretch'd His arms of love ;
While hovering cherubs sang some heavenly tune,
Their faces kindled with adoring joy.

III.

TRANSFIGURATION.

II.

WHILE still I gazed upon the pictured scene,
The outlines seem'd before mine eyes to swim,
And all the forms to waver and dislimn.
The Father faded in the clear serene
Of space ethereal, and no more was seen.
Slowly receded to the distance dim
The winged host, while, group'd where they had been,
A quire of holy women sang the hymn.
The Virgin still her baby fondly press'd,
But not upon the moon her feet were placed ;
Now on our kindly planet did they rest ;
And on the letter'd scroll above her head,
Where late the name DEIPARA I read,
Stood out L'UMANITÀ distinctly traced.

IV.

Quaerens me, sedisti lassa :

Redemisti, crucem passa.

O MATER dolorosa ! with what pain
Thy feet have upward trod the steep incline
Which leads to all things good ! that heart of thine—
What swords have pierc'd it through, whilst not in vain
Thy toil was spent to nurture, teach, and train
Hero and sage, and form that thing divine,
The Woman as we know her—to refine
The coarse, and make our rugged pathway plain.
Wearied and faint, thou yet with faith sublime
Hast labour'd on, and held thy suffering light
In contemplation of a better time.
How can we such long martyrdom requite ?
May heart, brain, hand thy duteous servants be,
And love, thought, life, be consecrate to Thee !

V.

‘In Te est totum quod volo et desidero.’

ONCE oft I strain'd mine eyes in hope to see
The form by human fancy drawn in air
Of a first Good, first Perfect and first Fair ;
For infinitely great, me-seem'd, must be
The Power to which my soul could bend her knee—
To which should rise the passion of her prayer.
But now such fruitless quest do I forbear,
Finding all fulness in Humanity.
Of the great thoughts that quicken and sustain
None was inspired by supernatural breath ;
Each sprang unprompted in a human brain.
And, search the depths below, the heights above,
Nought nobler wilt thou find than human love—
Love, that is subject to, yet conquers, Death.

VI.

GUARDIAN ANGELS.

THE Being that enfolds in her embrace
Our little lives and binds them into one,
We image as a Mother with her son
Clasp'd in her arms, because sole fount of grace
Is She to all the children of our race.
But, though we own her presence ever near,
She speaks no word to any mortal ear,
No mortal eye may look upon her face.
We know her through her angels, whom she sends—
Not airy creatures borne on radiant wings,
But loving women, born to be our friends,
To walk beside us on life's common way,
To be our charm and solace day by day,
And raise our drooping souls to higher things.

VII.

INTERPRETERS.

THOSE does our Virgin Mother, full of grace,
As her Vicegerents send, that we may see
Her mingled tenderness and purity
Reflected in each well-belovèd face ;
And other rarer spirits of our race
Ordains as her Interpreters, that She
Through them may speak her oracles, and we
Be mov'd her blessed service to embrace.
Two name I, whom our Master prized the most—
The mighty bard, who saw the depths of Hell,
And heard the anthems of the heavenly host ;
And the meek saint, who in his convent cell,
All worldly noises silenc'd, bent his ear
The whispers of the voice divine to hear.

VIII.

THE Master first brought clearly to our view
That woman's nature is a higher thing
Than man's, and from her, as a living spring,
Ever his noblest impulses he drew.
Yet was this precious truth not wholly new ;
To souls elect no secret had it been :
And here the Southern heart had farther seen
Than the cold Northern intellect could do.
Dante on Beatrice *upward* gazed,
All self-abased, in reverential love,
And with bow'd head receiv'd her grave rebuke ;
While Milton's Adam, as God's image rais'd
To fancied height, with condescending look
Eve's tender grace contemplates *from above*.

IX.

PISGAH.

IN th' irreligious city of the Seine
I sat, a listener at the Master's feet,
And to my soul his earnest words were sweet
As to parch'd earth the fertilizing rain.
He show'd me how men's spirits once again
In witness of a common faith shall meet,
And how their hearts in unison shall beat
Under Humanity's eternal reign.
The dawn is spreading over hill and plain,
And, when the growing morn full day shall be,
The renovated life of all our kind
Its metropolitan home and fane shall find
For ages long—O wondrous destiny!—
In the religious city of the Seine.

X.

'UTINAM VIDEREM.'

'O WOULD,' said holy Bernard, 'I could see
The Church of God as in the days of old !'
So yearns my feebler spirit to behold—
Ah ! yet far off—thy Church, Humanity !
As in the coming ages it shall be,
When nations shall be gather'd in thy fold,
In every tongue thy oracles be told,
And millions in thy temples bow the knee.
Then we no more shall spend our wealth of love
Upon imagin'd beings in the skies,
Or waste our thoughts on things beyond our ken ;
But flood our hearts with human sympathies,
Content our planet dwelling to improve,
And solace, raise, and bless our brother-men.

XI.

THE CHILDHOOD OF HUMANITY.

THE human child, arriving on earth's shore,
Finds itself welcomed to a loving breast,
And sweetly fed, and lapp'd in soothing rest ;
And, when the years of others' rule are o'er,
Wise counsel meets him, and the gather'd lore
Of the past ages' loftiest souls and best ;
And so, unless his lot be all unblest,
He grows in heart and head from more to more.
But when the race was born, and on its way
First enter'd, who its dubious steps could guide ?
From out itself it framed the needed stay.
It shaped ideal beings to preside
O'er its dim march, and in their fancied sway
Its own high thoughts and aims personified.

XII.

THE HUMAN HERITAGE.

ETERNAL Power, to whom our lives belong,
Heirs are we at our birth of all the store
Piled in thy treasure-house from days of yore
For use or splendour—ordinances strong
To guard the weak and tie the hands of wrong—
The civic wisdom, and the sacred lore
Potent to guide, to chasten, to restore—
The wealth of tender, noble, passionate song—
And all the marvel and the charm of Art.
Thou art the living fountain, whence alone
Comes all of stay or solace that is ours.
Shall we not then, with glad and grateful heart,
To thy dear service consecrate our powers,
And give thee back some portion of thine own ?

XIII.

‘ Non nobis, Domina, sed nomini Tuo.’

Brothers, remember what the Master said,
And all great souls had dimly felt before—
‘In sober truth, and ever more and more,
The men who live are govern’d by the dead.’
The rules by which our daily lives are led,
Our faith, our arts, our language and our lore—
We did not make them, but inherited,
Augmenting little the transmitted store.
For us, the children of a younger day,
The noble deeds of olden time were done ;
For us were Freedom’s ancient battles won.
And saintly sufferers trod the toilsome way ;
Be thankful, then, at thought of Marathon,
And ’midst Iona’s ruins pause and pray.

XIV.

THE NEW SYNTHESIS.

WHEN closed my song-charm'd boyhood's dreamy days,
Began austerer Science to invite
My spirit, seeking everywhere for light.
I learn'd the line and surface to appraise,
And star and planet fix'd my studious gaze.
Then did I yearn to reach a specular height,
Whose cloudless vantage should command the sight
Of Man's whole world and all his works and ways.
For guidance thither long I sought in vain,
Till he I count the chief of those who know
Taught us such mount of vision to attain,
Seven golden stairs ascending from below.
Eager I sprang his sacred lore to meet,
And sat a glad disciple at his feet.

XV.

MEA CULPA.

WHEN I remember how in youth, misled
By bookish lore and intellectual pride,
And in life's grave realities untried,
I blindly rank'd the heart below the head,
And, to my self-sufficient follies wed,
Unletter'd worth and simple faith decried—
Paining sweet souls that then were at my side,
And now are number'd with the blessed dead—
'Master,' I cry—when this I call to mind—
'Why did I not thy doctrine earlier know?
Then might I from remorseful thoughts be free
That haunt me now ; for none had power like thee
My wrestling rebel spirit to lay low,
And with the cords of strong persuasion bind.'

XVI.

ERE yet I reach'd the middle of life's way,
I found myself within a darksome wood,
Where most that in me dwelt of native good
Was stifled or obscured, my inner day
Was dimm'd, and more and more I went astray,
By Demas fool'd, by Lamian spells subdued ;
And with keen zeal unworthy aims pursued,
Prizing as jewels things of common clay.
Not mine the merit that at length I woke.
Ofttimes mine ears had caught the Master's word,
But now within my heart his voice was heard ;
And thou, my dear one, camest to my side.
I took thee for my guardian and my guide,
And bow'd my spirit to thy gentle yoke.

XVII.

DE PROFUNDIS.

‘LET all thy life be a perpetual prayer.’
So said the Master, and my soul replies—
‘Might but the fire within me oftener rise
And struggle upward into purer air !
For now, alas, depress’d by worldly care
Or narrowing thoughts, it droops and almost dies,
Till sudden inspiration vivifies
The flame once more ; but ah ! such grace is rare.’
Yet do I cleave unto the better part.
Let me love more, and nought I ask beside.
To others be the laurel crown of art,
And wealth, and all that ministers to pride.
Not these my portion—only let my heart
Be fill’d with love, and I am satisfied.

XVIII.

A POSITIVIST SOLEMNITY.

Now dawns the sacred day of All the Dead.
Not only those by household memories
Link'd with our lives, for whom on bended knees
Daily we yearn, and tears not seldom shed—
Nor only the great spirits who have led
Man's upward march to nobler destinies,
Whose record in Fame's golden book is read—
We reverence to-day; not only these,
But all, in whatsoever age or clime
(Albeit the names of most the unpitying Hours
Have hid for ever in the abyss of time),
Who faithful, patient, helpful strove to be,
And so, while worshipping imagin'd Powers,
True service did, Humanity! to Thee.

XIX.

A RELIGIOUS SYMBOL.

TREFOIL of Erin ! as I contemplate
Thy sister leaflets, I behold in these
An emblem of profound triplicities
That live in nature and in man's estate.
Three are the Norms that weave the web of fate
In silent loom—Past, Present, and To-be ;
And Feeling, Thought, and Action are the three
Handmaids that on the human spirit wait.
The Apostle of our isle—as legends tell—
Used thee to symbolise a mystery
Now fading from our souls ; but thou as well
May'st type for future men who look on thee
Our sacred Triad indivisible—
Family, Mother-land, Humanity.

XX.

THE MODERN FETISHISM.

Fear not, I pray thee, my too scrupulous friend,
Trusting the impulse of poetic thought,
To image all the visible world as fraught
With will and feeling, which for ever tend
To universal good, their common end.
Such genial faith, from primal instinct caught
By the first men, in these last times is taught
By highest wisdom, which thus fain would blend
With all of truth that studious years have found
The fresh conceptions of our infant race.
Doubt not the Sun upon his distant peers
And on his subject orbs looks fondly round,
And planets, dancing through delighted space,
Hail with admiring joy their sister spheres.

XXI.

Master, amid the turmoil and the strife,
How shall my spirit calm and trustful be ?
Thus only, if the fountains of my life
Are hidden in Humanity with thee.

THE TRIUMPH OF HUMANITY :

A HYMN OF THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

I.

A WONDROUS pageant fills th' historic page,
Moving through every age—
The long procession of the Gods of Man—
Forms, which his young imagination shaped
And with rich legend draped,
To guide his steps, ere Science yet began
With searching gaze the outer world to scan,
And which, as thought and various knowledge grew,
He moulded oft afresh, or clothed in vesture new.

II.

No human faith will we, with stupid pride,
Disparage or deride ;
Each for our race some precious work has done—
Knit social bonds, or selfish will repress'd,
And calm'd the troubled breast.
But now their tasks are wrought, their courses run—
And they must fade and vanish, all save ONE ;
'Though some may linger long, as loth to part,
Familiars of the home—penates of the heart.

III.

Our early sires, to whom small heritage
Came from a mother age,
By fancy and emotion wholly sway'd,
The likeness of their inner being found
In all they saw around.
The tree beneath whose boughs their childhood play'd,
The stream upon whose banks their youth had stray'd—
Not senseless things were these, but living powers
By fervid feeling stirr'd, with loves and hates like ours.

IV.

Then sprang the thought—'Those orbs that shine afar,
The Sun, the Moon, the star,
Must rule our lives, must send us good or ill.
Our days they gladden or illumine our night,
Our fields they bless or blight.
How shall we learn to read their secret will,
Their ordinances rightly to fulfil?
Choose we some gifted men their names to praise,
To study their intents, their altar-stones to raise.'

V.

So grew the faith that far-off heavenly powers
Govern'd this world of ours,
And quicken'd natural things that else were dead.
They, manlike beings of a mightier race,
By anger moved or grace,
On earthly issues sovereign influence shed,
Our projects thwarted or our wishes sped.
Priesthoods august arose to rule the lands,
And guide the wayward crowd by the divine commands.

VI.

And soon, in visions of the sons of song,
A many-colour'd throng,
The Olympians shone ; they loved the lyre and flute,
They heard, well-pleas'd, the din of martial strife,
The stir and stress of life.
And, ere Apollo's music yet was mute,
Follow'd a graver train in soberer suit,
Awakening deeper moods of reverent awe,
And bending Roman pride to the behests of law.

VII.

One people ruled the world ; the Imperial peace
Bade sterile conflicts cease ;
But its own gods each nation worshipp'd still.
'These various faiths,' the nobler instincts cried,
'Do but our hearts divide.
We want one righteous Power, one sovereign will,
To judge for all alike our good and ill.
And oh ! for one who mortal weakness knows,
And having learn'd to weep, can feel for human woes.'

VIII.

Treading a path of suffering and of shame,
The Man of Sorrows came.
Around him rose strong faith and purpose high,
And noble spirits welcomed pain and loss,
Might they but bear his cross,
Nay—for the love of him rejoiced to die ;
Because, 'twas said, he left his native sky,
And his pure soul a free-will offering gave,
The ruin'd race of men to succour and to save.

IX.

But not in him they found their surest stay,
For, when they knelt to pray,
They trembled, mindful of his judgment seat,
And, inly conscious of his broken laws,
Ask'd—'Who will plead our cause?
Is not his Mother tender-soul'd and sweet?
Oh! let us haste to kiss her blessed feet!
If stern the Judge, the mother-maid is mild;
She will assuage the wrath of her almighty child.'

X.

And so, beside the throne of Sire and Son,
In mystic union One—
Mother and Bride of Heaven, the Virgin stands;
She, Star of hope, the heavy-laden cheers,
She dries the mourner's tears.
Wherever sufferers pined in Christian lands,
To her for help they raised their suppliant hands;
High saints, great bards, did homage at her shrine,
And artists loved to paint her human face divine.

XI.

Long by the chosen spirits of the West
The Eastern maid was bless'd
As type supreme of tenderest womanhood.
In her ideal nature they combined
Whate'er in human kind
Inspired their love or won their gratitude—
All that they knew of bountiful and good,
All that in Woman's gentler breast began
And by contagion sweet pass'd to the soul of man.

XII.

And now that riper thought has purged our eyes,
In her we recognise
A beautiful, though faint, prefigurement
Of Thee, Humanity! in these last days
Giv'n to our longing gaze—
Great Being, in whose soul are truly blent
All gifts to her by pious fancy lent.
Each dear addition link'd to Mary's name—
Star, Refuge, Fount of grace—thine own may better claim.

XIII.

To power, controll'd by law and led by love,
Not seated far above
In the blank sky where comes no voice of prayer,
But here incarnate, blessed one ! in Thee—
We bow the adoring knee.
Grateful we own Thy fond maternal care,
And view with trustful hope the promise fair
Which, bright'ning now, will shine on human souls
Long as through gladden'd space Thy planet-dwelling rolls.

XIV.

So let the mighty organ shed around
Its stormy waves of sound,
And be the solemn silver trumpets blown,
And let ten thousand hearts and voices raise
The anthem-note of praise ;
For on this day, by bard and sage foreshown,
The Woman-spirit mounts th' eternal throne.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
And let Her enter in, whose reign all earth awaits.

III.
MISCELLANEOUS.

A NATION'S WEALTH.

O ENGLAND, thou hast many a precious dower ;
But of all treasures it is thine to claim,
Prize most the memory of each sainted name,
That in thy realm, in field or hall or bower
Hath wrought high deeds or utter'd words of power—
Unselfish warrior, without fear or blame—
Statesman, with sleepless watch and steadfast aim
Holding his country's helm in perilous hour—
Poet, whose heart is with us to this day
Embalm'd in song—or Priest, who by the ark
Of faith stood firm in troublous times and dark.
Call them not dead, my England ! such as they
Not *were*, but *are* ; within us each survives,
And lives an endless life in others' lives.

SOCIAL HEREDITY.

MAN is no mushroom growth of yesterday.
His roots strike deep into the hallow'd mould
Of the dead centuries ; ordinances old
Govern us, whether gladly we obey,
Or vainly struggle to resist their sway :
Our thoughts by ancient thinkers are controll'd,
And many a word in which our thoughts are told
Was coin'd long since in regions far away.
The strong-soul'd nations, destin'd to be great,
Honour their sires and reverence the Past ;
They cherish and improve their heritage.
The weak, in blind self-trust or headlong rage,
The olden time's transmitted treasure cast
Behind them, and bemoan their loss too late.

SOCIAL ORIGINS.

THINK sometimes when you read a lovely lay
Of Tennyson or Wordsworth—this hath sprung
From germs that lived while yet our world was young.
Give your imagination leave to play,
And you will see how on a far-off day
In a rude tent a wild-eyed audience hung
On a love-tale by primal poet sung,
And with loud plaudits own'd the singer's sway.
And when you hear the organ's thunderous groan
Roll through the vast cathedral's crowded space,
Think how the early fathers of our race,
Oppress'd with fear or overwhelm'd with care,
Turn'd to unseen creations of their own
For help and hope, and bow'd the knee in prayer.

SAINT PAUL.

TRUE Prince of the Apostles, great Saint Paul!
Upon that day, with mighty issues rife,
Which form'd and fix'd the purpose of thy life,
Not from the blank, impassive heav'n did fall
The words that thrill'd thee ; that imagin'd call
Was but the echo of the inward voice
That from thy spirit's shrine decreed the choice
Glorious for thee and fraught with good to all.
' It *must* be true : I saw how Stephen died.
The Lord he serv'd was no mere child of earth.
This faith will mould the Gentile, as the Jew,
To its own image, will make all things new,
And give our worn-out world a second birth.
Henceforth I live to preach the Crucified.'

THE SOCIAL FUTURE.

As, with enforc'd yet unreluctant pace,
We downward move along life's westward slope,
Slow fades the once bright gleam of personal hope,
And larger looms the future of the race ;
Our wistful eyes the goodly prospect trace,
Seen through a haze of forecast ; there outspread
Lie the fair fields our children's feet shall tread
When we have pass'd to our abiding place.
Oh ! sons and daughters of the coming age,
Give worthy meed of gratitude and praise
To those true souls who, in less happy days,
Have lived for others—most of all for you,—
Have stored the wealth which is your heritage.
And plann'd the work it will be yours to do.

PASTOR AB AMPHRYSO.

I.

‘ THOU seemest, O Lysanias, all distraught,
And turnest from us, as intent to hear
Some far-off music, or as if thine ear
The voices of aerial spirits caught.’

‘ Yea, so it is. Late, hastening homeward, near
This spot, I heard such notes that, sure, methought
Apollo from Olympus must have brought
His flute divine to charm our lower sphere.
Now the ecstatic carol of a bird,
And now a long-drawn passionate wail I heard.
Sudden it ceas’d ; but, ever since, the sound
With bodiless presence haunts me, and I seem
To see not, or forget, the things around,
Wrapt in the cloudy covert of a dream ’

11.

‘ WELL ! hast thou seen thy magic minstrel ? ’ ‘ Yea,
And spoken with him. Where Penéus pours
Between steep cliffs his flood to yonder shores,
I found him sitting thoughtful yesterday.
He gave me greeting kind, and bade me stay ;
Then talk’d, and nobly, of Life, Love, and Art,
Of things divine and human, till the gray
Of evening fell around and made us part.
Creon, he is a god : such brow and eyes !
Music unmatch’d, and grand poetic thought !
The blessed ones, they tell us, oft descend
From their high dwelling, and in humble guise
Move amongst men. Unhappy they, my friend,
Who, meeting the Immortals, know them not.’

STREAMS.

I.

STREAMS! ye have ever been the friends of men—
From tiny brook, the playmate of the child,
Or torrent, dashing down the rocky glen,
That fills the soul of youth with rapture wild,
To Rhine or Seine, a nation's pride, that wends
Through peopled plains, by cities great and free,
As with full sweep majestic it descends,
Bearing its tribute to the mighty sea.
Most to the sacred poets streams are dear:
Not seldom, as the singers in old time
Drew inspiration from Castalian dews,
They still by fount or river find the Muse ;
And, mingled with their songs, we seem to hear
The voice of waters, soothing or sublime.

STREAMS.

II.

YES! all the noblest of the tuneful train
Lov'd running waters and have sung their praise.
Xanthus and Simois in old Homer's lays
Still rush in whirling eddies to the main ;
We catch at times through Milton's lofty strain
Warblings of Siloa and her sister fount
That bathe the feet of Sion's holy mount ;
Dante remembers among souls in pain
The rills that speed down slopes of bright-green sward
To join his Arno ; in Petrarca's song
Seems Sorga to console his amorous woe
With soft response ; and Spenser, laureate bard
Of British rivers, marshals all their throng
To pass before us in triumphal show.

NATIONAL PRESAGE.

UNHAPPY Erin, what a lot was thine !
Half-conquer'd by a greedy robber band ;
Ill govern'd with now lax, now ruthless hand ;
Misled by zealots, wresting laws divine
To sanction every dark or mad design ;
Lured by false lights of pseudo-patriot league
Through crooked paths of faction and intrigue ;
And drugg'd with selfish flattery's poison'd wine.
Yet, reading all thy mournful history,
Thy children, with a mystic faith sublime,
Turn to the future, confident that Fate,
Become at last thy friend, reserves for thee,
To be thy portion in the coming time,
They know not what—but surely something great.

A PROTEST.

‘WHOM the gods love, dies young’—Oh, say not so!
Thou art a father—can the cruel word
Lodge in thy breast or from thy lips be heard?
Let the young live, ye awful Powers, and know,
Ere they pass hence, the savour of that best
Of fruit that grows upon the tree of life—
The happy home, the love of child and wife—
And, working with their fellows, earn their rest.
The old must go, and others fill their room;
So is the blood of the world re-vivified.
But ah! ’tis piteous when a father stands
O’er his dead son, and holds the pulseless hands,
Or mother for her daughter must provide
Not marriage robes, but garments of the tomb.

[MAJUBA.

IN MEMORIAM, G. P. C.

GENTLE and brave, well skilled in that dread lore
Which mightiest nations dare not to unlearn ;
Fair lot for thee had leapt from Fortune's urn,
Just guerdon of long toil ; and more and more
We counted for her favourite was in store.
Nor failed prophetic fancy to descry
Wreaths of high praise and crowns of victory
Which in our thought thy brows already wore.
But He who portions out our good or ill
Willed an austerer glory should be thine,
And nearer to the Cross than to the Crown.
Then lay, ye mourners, there your burden down,
And hear calm voices from the inner shrine
Which whisper 'Peace!' and say, 'Be still, be still!'

R. C. D.

ON READING THE SONNET BY R. C. D.,

Entitled 'IN MEMORIAM, G. P. C.'

YES! mourn the soul, of high and pure intent,
Humane as valiant, in disastrous fight
Laid low on far Majuba's bloody height!
Yet, not his death alone must we lament,
But more such spirit on evil mission sent,
To back our broken faith with armed might,
And the unanswered plea of wounded right
Strike dumb by warfare's brute arbitrament.
And while these deeds are done in England's name,
Religion unregardful keeps her cell:
The tuneful note that wails the dead, we hear;
Where are the sacred thunders that should swell
To shame such foul oppression, and proclaim
Eternal justice in the nation's ear?

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE TRANSVAAL.

KRUGER, I hail thee, late-born ironside,
Who, jeer'd at by a sceptic, scoffing age,
Yet, bold in warfare and in council sage,
With steadfast, strenuous effort hast defied
The lawless greed and overweening pride
That sought by open force or treacherous stealth
To slay or wound thy homely commonwealth—
Helvetia of the south. Whate'er betide,
Valour and constancy to guard her right
Are thine and hers; yet lacks there something more—
To spread within her bounds the sacred light
Of Science and all humanising lore,
And rear amid her brave and stalwart race
The tender flow'rs of gentleness and grace.

1898.

1899.

FAREWELL, old year, unhappy Ninety-nine !
No personal cause have I to hate thy name ;
While thou wert here, to me no suffering came :
No bright young life, rear'd at this hearth of mine,
At call of duty join'd the battle-line.
I mourn the public loss, the public shame—
The blot thou leav'st upon our country's fame.
On history's page this record will be thine—
That a vain man, by England's evil fate
Clothed with brief power to guide and wound the State,
By mingling serpent guile and menace rude
Goaded a patient people into war,
And made our good Victoria's evening star
Look on a surging sea of brothers' blood.

A MONITION.

ENGLAND, on every sea thy navies ride,
And larger breadths of earth thy Throne obey
Than own'd of old the conquering Roman's sway ;
Yet, at this full swell of thy fortune's tide,
Hear thou a warning word : Beware of pride—
A Nemesis sits ever at her gates ;
Shun selfish greed ; respect thy sister States,
And fail not those who in thy truth confide.
Wrong not the dark-hued subjects of thy rule,
Compel them not to toil for others' gain
In blind and unaspiring servitude.
Rather, with godlike art Prométhean, school
Each laggard race by discipline humane,
And lead them gently on to all things good.

A FILIAL TRIBUTE.

I.

IF I have heard with wonder and delight
The verse of Homer, with triumphant chime
Breaking for ever on the shores of Time ;
Have eyed, well pleased, the Theban eagle's flight ;
Have watch'd the scenic vision of the blight
That vengeful track'd the Thyestéan crime ;
Have dwelt, deep-rapt, on Plato's dreams sublime,
Or soberer wisdom of the Stagirite ;
And listen'd, other music fallen mute,
To Thyrsis piping in the summer shade
By Arethusa's springs on oaten flute—
My mother ! thy laborious widow'd days
Have won for me these boons—ah ! ill repaid
By this my heartfelt, but too tardy, praise.

A FILIAL TRIBUTE.

II.

To have look'd on these Greek splendours—what a gain!
And scarcely less that I have learn'd to prize
The imperial Roman spirit, strong and wise,
Nor wanting in a pure poetic vein—
As in the sympathetic Mantuan swain,
Whose Muse 'walks highest,' if she seldom 'flies';
Or him whose logic-web of closest grain
Is shot with fancy's rich embroideries—;
The pregnant phrase of Tacitus to know,
And Tully's amplitude and liberal flow;
All this I owe to thee; and, better still,
The pattern of a life for others spent.
Oh! had I earlier tamed my stubborn will,
And my proud heart to humble service bent.

SIR L. ALMA-TADEMA'S 'WOMEN OF AMPHISSA.'

How well the picture tells its lovely tale !
About the agora in slumber deep
The stranger Maenads lie, all passion-pale,
And worn with wanderings over hill and dale,
Through the thick wood and up the toilsome steep.
O'er them the matrons of the city keep
Tender and reverent watch, which will not fail
Till morning's touch shall break the charm of sleep.
See ! one by one they wake, they ope their eyes
No longer with the Bacchic frenzy wild,
And gaze upon the scene in mute surprise.
A kind voice comforts each and calls her 'child.'
Kind hands upraise them, and the sacred band
Is shelter'd in the homesteads of the land.

NOSTALGIA.

ONE—where I know not, nor how long ago—
Was rapt in vision to the highest heaven,
Where John and Dante came. In vain had striven
Eyes yet death-doom'd to pierce the fiery glow
That hides the throne ; but all the burning row
Of Seraphim he saw, the Spirits seven,
Martyrs, high saints, and souls of men forgiven.
Then his heart spoke—'amid this dazzling show,
And with the songs of angels in my ears,
I think of suffering souls I left below.
I could not breathe in these too happy spheres.
Better than joy is sympathy with woe ;
Here I should pine for pity's human tears,
Myself to shed them, and to see them flow.'

WINGED THOUGHTS.

LITTLE they know us, ev'n who know us best.
Oft, when the social circle, frank and gay,
Sports with the topics of the passing day.
I seem, at friendly challenge, with keen zest
To catch and echo back the flying jest ;
Yet will my inmost thought be far away—
Like bird that lights, and lights, but does not stay—
Beside my lost ones in their long low rest.
One sleeps in Erin, near the home she bless'd,
Where grateful hearts still worship her ; and one,
Who pass'd, his active manhood scarce begun,
And all his poet-soul yet unexpress'd,
Lies under tamarisk boughs, where Afric's sun
Looks down on hallow'd ground at Beaufortwest.

ST. ANGELO, LOUGH ERNE, 1898.

How brief our dates ! how soon Death apprehends
The sinner Life, and claps us in our tombs,
While Fame, if granted, but short space illumes
A name, ere, shining, its own self it spends !
But life has other measures, other ends
Than individual merely ; it assumes
Ampler proportions than these narrow rooms,
And infinite in depth and breadth extends
For him who recognizes that each deed,
The slightest, has results that go to build
The future, be it for Man's good or ill.
Deeds born have issue endless, that no greed
Of Time can touch, till Time's course be fulfill'd ;
And, dying, by his deeds man liveth still.

T. D. I.

WOULD'ST thou be economical of Time
That, heedless squanderer of its treasury,
Wastes its dear wealth on years that bring no prime,
And grants no law to genius lest it die ?
Would'st thou have store of that thou canst not bind, †
And win dominion o'er the uncontroll'd ?
While having but as much as all mankind,
Would'st yet have more than others of this gold ?
Then use time well, and crowd thy useful years
With action, knowing that, where idlers are,
The plea of occupation most appears,
And who use most, most hours have still to spare :
For this is true, and will be to the end,
Who wastes the least, has ever most to spend.

T. D. I.

A FRAGMENT.

From the Norse.

I.

‘ NOBLE warrior ! droop not thus ;
Tower of strength thou hast in us.
Yonder stand our anvils ten,
Round them, see, are stalwart men—
Bare broad shoulder, sinewy limb,
Black-brow’d feature sooty-grim ;
Eye like glare of smouldering fire,
Lighted with a dull desire.
These shall sweat ; their hammers swinging,
They will keep the anvils ringing,
Forging thee such trusty mail,
Nought against it will prevail.’

II.

'GOD-LIKE artist, spare thy pain!
Strength and skill alike are vain.
When upon the destin'd day
Balder meets me in the fray,
Were my breast-plate triple steel,
If his shaft but once it feel,—
Such that weapon's magic power—
Like a guilty thing 'twill cower,
And, smit through with fear and wonder,
Shrink, and cleave, and fall asunder.
Well I know this weird is mine—
I am human, he divine.'

TO A. J.

A MONODY.

BRIGHT spirit ! wheresoe'er thou art,
Take this sad tribute of my heart ;
Or if within the realms of space
Thou ownest now no dwelling-place,
Yet let me hum my descant o'er,
Though ear of thine it reach no more.

Not often mov'd thy thoughts away
From active duties of the day,
Yet was thy faith, I doubt not, sure
That after death our lives endure,
And, safe on some far distant shore,
They dwell whom here we meet no more.

Such golden dream I do not share ;
My promis'd land is here, not there ;
Here, where the brethren of my race
Love, work, and weep their little space,
And, with green hillocks cover'd o'er,
Lie those who bless our homes no more.

That earlier vision fades away,
As twilight kindles into day.
Another prospect greets our view—
Of Earth array'd in vesture new.
Nor need we grieve that now no more
We shape the future as of yore.

For truth is truth, and love is love,
Though never register'd above ;
And Duty looks her mute appeal,
And we its mastering force can feel,
Though it may be we live no more
When this our earthly life is o'er.

We need no verdict from the skies
To tell us thou wert good and wise.
Though angel trump ne'er break thy rest,
Thy heart was pure, thy work was blest ;
Nor is thy sacred service o'er,
Though here thy face is seen no more.

Thy quickening power is with us still,
Thy memory spurs the laggard will ;
Thy call to labour while we may,
And reap the harvest of the day,
Inspires our souls not less, but more,
Because thy well-wrought task is o'er.

And oft the wish will haunt my breast
To earn like thee my final rest.
Might I, at parting, leave behind
Some worthy gift to human kind,—
Perchance a not unvalued store,
When I on earth am seen no more !

O well for those who chant a song
That through the ages echoes long,
Or rear some pile of thought sublime,
Strong to withstand the shocks of time ;
And so, when this first life is o'er,
Still live in others evermore.

Not such my lot—I have but power
To breathe the feeling of the hour—
Half said, half sung—in simple strain,
Like this, whose sorrowful refrain
Some kindly souls may murmur o'er,
When my poor voice is heard no more.

Yet do I fret not, nor repine,
Because no loftier gifts are mine ;
Lamenting rather that my past
With stains of sin is overcast,
Which, if anew I traced it o'er,
I trust, should soil the page no more.

Be still, sad heart, nor thus complain,
Nor spend thy waning strength in vain.
Thou canst not by repentant tears
Efface the record of the years.
Be true, be loving now, the more
That love and life will soon be o'er.

THE moon was bright that Autumn night,
The skies around her blue ;
Within this wood alone we stood,
And breathed a fond adieu.

The leaves that fell might seem to tell
How all things change and fade ;
But time and tide our hearts defied—
We faced them undismay'd.

For, loving thus, oh ! what to us
Was Fortune's fickle breath ?
But, holding light life's utmost spite,
We never thought of death.

' The hours,' said I, ' will quickly fly—
A year will soon be o'er ;
Then holy bands will join our hands,
And we shall part no more.'

The moon is bright this April night,
The sky as blue as then ;
The wood retrieves its fallen leaves :
We ne'er shall meet again.

'A year,' I said, 'and we shall wed.'
Ere half that year is flown,
Spring flow'rets wave upon thy grave,
And I am here alone.

My hopes are cross'd, my treasure lost ;
Joyless my life must be ;
Yet—thus bereft—there still is left
The memory of thee.

Beneath these boughs that heard our vows—
Ah ! now they hear but mine—
Again to-night my troth I plight
To be for ever thine.

‘Vos plaudite!’ th’ imperial Roman said
To them that stood around his dying bed.
To those I love, who after me shall live,
This be my message—‘Pity, and forgive!’

VERSICLES.

WHAT is the watchword of the coming ages?
What law their master spirits will control?
This—'Serve Humanity with heart and soul,
And, having done thy duty, ask no wages.'

Content thee to obey: thou would'st not tread
With step as firm in leading as when led.

'How to be happy?'—smiling, spoke the sage—
'Most miss the way, yet never cease the quest.
Here is the secret—still, from youth to age,
Keep one beloved image in thy breast.'

When in a man the flower of courtesy
And reverence for the better sex you see,
'Sweet-natured was his mother,' boldly say,
'Or else, 'tis certain, Love has pass'd his way.'

Each nation master at its own fireside—
The claim is just, and so one day 'twill be ;
But a wise race the time of fruit will bide,
Nor pluck th' unripen'd apple from the tree.

Live for thyself, thy pleasure and thy gain,
And with thee ne'er will Happiness abide :
But serve thy fellows and relieve their pain,
And she will steal, unbidden, to thy side.

The Records of the Time each morning bring
Some mournful tale of human suffering ;
And, as I daily pace the crowded street,
How many careworn faces do I meet !
Could we of each the secret story know,
That, sure, were an Apocalypse of woe.
Oh ! melt, hard heart ! thy brethren's sorrows feel,
And soothe and comfort, if thou canst not heal.

'How sacred is this place,' in awe I cried,
Pacing the mighty temple's glorious nave ;
And then, methought, an inner voice replied—
'Sacred indeed—and other things beside,
The household hearth, the cradle, and the grave.'

The thoughts that wait upon the uninspired
Are by laborious effort drawn from far ;
To him who sings with inborn fervour fired
They come spontaneous and say, 'Here we are.'

As down the westward slope of life we move,
Shapes from the past our daily steps attend.
So live, that memory in thy age may prove
No dread intruder, but a welcome friend.

Fain would I serve my brethren. How shall I
Hasten the advent of the golden year?
And a voice answer'd—'Do not strive or cry,
But whisper truths into thy neighbour's ear.'

Be not too much exalted, if to-day
Strong winds of faith bear up thy spirit's wings;
Soon the high passion will have pass'd away,
And thy soul stumble among worldly things.

Despair not, if thy spirit-fire burns low,
Nor think its ardour will return no more ;
Soon thy heart's altar once again will glow,
And the flame tremble upward as before.



'These thoughts are old.' True ; but each race of men
In its own way must think them o'er again.

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD.

I.

Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight ?
Who blushes at the name ?
When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
Who hangs his head for shame ?
He 's all a knave, or half a slave,
Who slights his country thus ;
But a true man, like you, man,
Will fill your glass with us.

II.

We drink the memory of the brave.
The faithful and the few :
Some lie far off beyond the wave,
Some sleep in Ireland, too.
All, all are gone ; but still lives on
The fame of those who died ;
And true men, like you, men,
Remember them with pride.

III.

Some on the shores of distant lands
Their weary hearts have laid,
And by the stranger's heedless hands
Their lonely graves were made ;
But though their clay be far away
Beyond th' Atlantic foam,
In true men, like you, men,
Their spirit's still at home.

IV.

The dust of some is Irish earth,
Among their own they rest,
And the same land that gave them birth
Has caught them to her breast ;
And we will pray that from their clay
Full many a race may start
Of true men, like you, men,
To act as brave a part.

V.

They rose in dark and evil days
To right their native land ;
They kindled here a living blaze,
That nothing shall withstand.
Alas ! that might can vanquish right—
They fell and pass'd away ;
But true men, like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.

VI.

Then here 's their memory ! may it be
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty
And teach us to unite.
Through good and ill, be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate,
And true men be you, men,
Like those of Ninety-Eight.





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